

11: Haguenaue--40 [2]
116, 241, 695, 721, 769

T-3

(no date) 1929

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

Head hunting was such a sacred practice that it could only be carried on under certain circumstances:

1. to please the spirits of the departed ancestors, and to ensure their protection;
2. to be able to enter the abode of the souls after death;
3. so that the community would have a good harvest;
4. to determine the innocence of an accused man, or to decide which one of two adversaries was right; the spirits will permit the innocent man to get a head while the guilty person will not succeed.

16: Müller--236 [2] U-3
116, 692, 695, 721, 787

(no date) 1910

Formosan Aborigines

The aboriginal chiefs administer justice either independently or together with the tribal elders. If a case is doubtful a trial by ordeal is held. This is preceded by certain formalities. The chieftain first of all asks the soothsayers and the men who interpret dreams whether a trial by ordeal should be held. If he has their consent he orders the accused to go on a headhunting expedition. The latter then makes the necessary preparations. He puts his weapons in a sacred place and lives in seclusion in a hut. If a day arrives which from the flight of birds he judges to be favorable he starts on the expedition together with several friends. If he is successful he is declared free from guilt, but if he returns home without a head he is punished.

22: Wiedfeldt—29
116, 685, 721, 695

F-5

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

If two clan heads have a dispute concerning a piece of land, the tribal chief first discusses the matter, and then fixes a period of a few days, after which they are to appear again, bringing with them all the skulls that the members of their clans have been able to capture in the meantime. The clan chief who presents the most skulls gets the land. If a gun is stolen and the thief can not be found, the clans which are under suspicion, but never more than ten at the most, are ordered by the tribal chief to go out on a head-hunt. The clan that does not bring back any skulls, or the one that brings back the smallest number, is considered the thief. If a supposed murderer denies his deed, he has to present a certain number of skulls within a fixed time. The number of skulls rises according to how well founded the suspicions are. If he brings the skulls, he is not guilty.

22: Wiedfeldt-29-30 F-5
116, 721, 114, 881, 695

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

Although Bullock and many others after him write that "the wild savages of Formosa seem to carry on the practice of man hunting out of mere devilry," a somewhat more thorough investigation shows that the hunting of skulls has a very definite legal significance, and hence springs from other grounds than mere devilry. [30] Successful skull hunting is taken as a sign that one has come of age, and is accepted as evidence in penal and civil law.

22: Wiedfeldt--45
116, 692, 695.

F-5

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

In the Atayal tribes, each of the two legal authorities decides his cases definitely, with no possibility of appeal. There are no lay assessors or boards. The two chiefs act independently, although they themselves are laymen, and live on equal terms with the other members of their tribe. The action is taken by the injured party, or civil plaintiff, and in some cases by his clan. The community only helps him to obtain his legal due, or intervenes, if he refuses to act. Naturally, the proceedings are conducted orally, and are brief. The testimony of eye-witnesses or the skull-hunt serve as evidence.

24: Anonymous--92 [5]

U-3

(no date) 1892

Formosan Aborigines

116, 177, 212, 622, 695

The chiefs of one tribe are divided into the head chief and assistant chiefs. There are five or six of these in a community, depending upon the number of families. Trials in one tribe are held in the community house; minor feud are settled elsewhere. Among the clerks of court, there are some who know the Dutch writing; these are called chiao-ts'ê (registrars), and they count all those who go in or out. They dip a goose feather quill into the ink and they write across the page from left to right, instead of up and down. It is said that in recent times, the aborigines have adopted Chinese customs, and that private teachers are trying to teach the children Chinese literature, customs, and music.

The moral code of the natives demands that they take revenge on the enemy who robbed them of their fertile land and sent them to the barren mountains. This tradition is handed down from generation to generation, and it is believed that it is actually a good deed to obtain the head of one of the enemies of the country. (2) Their revenge

2. For that reason head hunting has increased during the first few years; the Japanese, without harming the natives themselves, have penetrated into their region and exploited it.

is therefore never personal. It is not a question of decapitating the man who has felled a certain camphor tree, for instance. Everyone who belongs to the enemy's party is liable for the common guilt with his head. Since it is also considered an act of courage to get the head of an enemy, this trophy is necessary to one who wants to marry. The bridegroom places the head, a bloody token of his ability to become a husband, at the feet of his bride. A second reason for this custom is a superstition which cannot be eradicated. Thus, in the north, the harvest festival in honor of the gods is celebrated by an offering consisting of several human heads.

On Formosa, headhunting takes the place of a procession held to implore the deity for rain or sun. Finally, headhunting also takes the place of a trial by ordeal. If a

31: Hofmann-610-611 N-3

(1909) 1912

Formosan Aborigines-2

116, 554, 583, 695, 721, 782

case cannot be decided, [611] the chief of a tribe, the guardian of the law, proclaims that he who is the first to bring back the head of an enemy, is in the right.